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ABSTRACT

A kindergarten teacher implemented a practicum intervention designed to improve teachers' communication with parents of kindergarten children concerning curriculum and school activities. In particular, the intervention aimed to increase parental involvement in spite of the fact that parents were unable to spend time at the school. A computer and selected software programs were used to provide parents with information about topics and activities related to daily classroom objectives. Computer hardware included an Apple IIe and an ImageWriter printer. Software included Appleworks, Print Shop, Print Shop Companion, and Print Shop graphics data disks. Materials and information developed from teachers' weekly team planning sessions were sent home for 8 weeks. Information consisted of a monthly curriculum overview, a calendar, and a list of activities that parents could easily implement at home with little time and few supplies. Evaluation data indicated that parents found the materials useful. Related materials, such as the parent needs survey instrument, the activity calendars, curriculum overview, and a list of parent and child activities, are appended. (RH)

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IMPROVING COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS OF KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN CONCERNING CURRICULUM AND SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

by

Nancy Jo Fiandach

A Practicum Report
Submitted to the Center for the Advancement of Education
of Nova University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement
for the Degree of Master of Science in
Computer Applications.

December 1989

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Abstract

Improving Communication With Parents of Kindergarten Children Concerning Curriculum and School Activities. Fiandach, Nancy Jo, 1988: Practicum Report, Nova University, Center for the Advancement of Education. Descriptors: Parent/Teacher Communication Parent/Teacher Cooperation Early Education Kindergarten Parent Participation.

The author developed and implemented a program which focused on providing information to parents of Kindergarten students concerning current curriculum and classroom activities. Surveys were conducted to assess parent needs and to assess whether parents were better informed after eight weeks of receiving computer generated materials. The monthly materials that parents received consisted of a calendar with school and classroom activities, a curriculum overview of major concepts for the month and a suggested list of parent/child activities to reinforce classroom curriculum objectives. All information developed by the author was stored on computer data disks to allow materials to be revised yearly based on teacher planning. The author shared the program intent and materials with three Kindergarten colleagues and they requested the parents of their students receive the monthly information also.

After receiving the computer generated materials for eight weeks, parents were enthusiastic, responsive and requested that the materials continue to be sent home with students because of their usefulness and impact. Appendices include district home/school communication overview, survey to establish parent need, survey to assess results, activity calendars, curriculum overview and parent/child activities for the month of September and October.

AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT

I hereby state that this document and all the information it contains is my own work. Where it has been necessary to gather information from the works of others, I have acknowledged such work through the accepted practice of references and editorial practice. I give this testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of others in the field and with the hope that my work, presented here, will earn a similiar respect.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Jo Fiandach

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I. PURPOSE

Background

The site of this practicum is an elementary school which is located in a large metropolitan area in central Arizona. The population of the city is over 250,000. The school district is growing rapidly and builds one to three new schools each year. Total School enrollment is over 60,000 students. The practicum school was built in 1979 in a rural area covered with citrus groves, cotton fields and ranches. Nine years later the school neighborhood is densely populated with churches, parks, a private school, apartments, single family residences and large family estates. Seventy nine percent of the student population reside in single family homes and 21 percent reside in apartments.

The school services over 1100 students in kindergarten through sixth grade. The student population comes from approximately two square miles surrounding the school site and a five square mile neighborhood from an Indian reservation northwest of the city. Bus transportation is provided for 39 percent of the student population.

The families serviced by the elementary school are economically and educationally diversified ranging from those on federal assistance and little parent education to financially independent and college graduate

degrees. The large majority of students come from upper middle class homes where one or both parents are professionals. Many homes have both parents working to provide a comfortable income and cultural advantages for their family. Single parent or guardian homes comprise 16 percent of the student population. Eighty six percent of the students are of Anglo backgound.

The school staff consists of 48 certified members including; principal, classroom teachers, subject area specialists, media specialist, psychologist and special education teachers. Some of these are less than full time positions and possibly service other schools as well. The support staff includes six instructional aides who work less than 40 hours per week. The average percentage of new teachers over a five year period is less than 13 percent, excluding the staff additions due to the changes in total student population. When staff members were interviewed they indicated that the main factors causing the small turnover were strong community support and the high priority that parents give to children receiving a quality education.

The author's position is kindergarten classroom teacher with normal responsibilities for two sessions of instruction and reporting to parents. The morning class is a heterogeneous group of 27 students and the

afternoon class is an identified group of 15 high risk students in the Foundational Skills Program. This special program was designed by the district to better meet the needs of all students in the primary grades. Additional funds assist in supplying personnel and materials to supplement the existing program for students at-risk for a successful school experience. This kindergarten class is composed of students from the four heterogeneous morning classes.

Kindergarten children who are registered for the Fall session are screened in May using the district developed Readiness Inventory. Children who score less than 13 items mastered out of 19, are rescreened in August and identified as possible candidates for the author's Foundational Skills Kindergarten class. Any newly registered students are also screened at this time. The children who are placed in the program, receive an additional half-day of instruction from the author for reinforcement and enrichment of skills critical for mastery of kindergarten objectives. Because the needs of the students are fluid, movement in and out of the program is flexible. Students return to only a half-day session when they experience a significant change in self-confidence or academic growth. Once the school year begins, placement is based on teacher judgement of student performance, rather

than primarily test scores. In addition to normal classroom materials, the afternoon class has been provided with a 19 hour instructional aide, an Apple IIe computer, and an ImageWriter printer.

Problem Statement

A vitally important goal of the school district is to provide parents with information that will allow learning to be a joint and cognizant effort of home and school. This cooperative effort seeks to enhance the emotional, social, physical and academic growth by providing a support system for each child. The school district through educator and community study groups has observed that a problem exists and that parents want and need to be better informed. The four levels of Parent Education identified by the school district demonstrate the current availibility of services to parents (Appendix A). A chart of possible areas to increase communication and parent involvement in the schools is titled Home Connection (Appendix B). The district goal of parent involvement is to "improve each child's self-esteem, develop enthusiasm for life-long learning and provide opportunities for success". The author selected School Communications as one of ten areas identified on the Home Connection which is essential for positive interaction between school

and home. The author's knowledge of this area is based on twenty-four years as an educator and parent.

The opportunity for exchange of pertinent information at the elementary level is most often limited to the traditional one-way communication of four report cards and the two optional parent-teacher conferences. The kindergarten report card provides general information covering academic and a small amount of social growth that a student is making. The reports are not specific to the small steps that are necessary to enhance student learning in the classroom. Report cards identify generalities of growth over nine week periods of time.

Many parents are unable to attend parent conferences, volunteer in the classroom, or take advantage of parent seminars because of work schedules. The parenting process and parent responsibilities of today's society demonstrate that diverse lifestyles prevent parents from some of the nuturing and child-rearing tasks that are necessary for parents to be informed (Swick, Hobson, & Duff, 1979). Approximately 35 percent of the parents of kindergarten students do not attend parent conferences and over 75 percent do not attend parent workshops or seminars offered by the school or district. Interviewing the principal and teachers revealed that lack of parent attendance at conferences increases alarmingly as

students progress through six grades of school.

It has been observed that parents attending conferences often express frustration that they do not know what to do to facilitate necessary changes for their child and provide activities that would enhance skill retention. Teachers state that parents who do work with their child are sometimes providing activities that are inappropriate and perhaps detrimental to the child's academic growth by using activities that are too difficult and methods that do not take into account the child's developmental needs. Difficult activities and an inappropriate setting create negative effects on the learner's self-esteem.

Taking into account the above information, the author developed a survey to specifically assess the knowledge and feelings that parents had toward the school communication that they received pertaining to their child (Appendix C). The survey was administered to all parents who registered a kindergarten age child in May while their child was administered the district Readiness Inventory. One hundred twenty six surveys were given to parents and one hundred were completed and returned. The magnitude of the problem is clearly demonstrated by the survey results. Parent responses indicated that (a) 69 percent would like to help in the classroom but could not because of other commitments,

(b) 61 percent previously had not been provided with information beyond report cards and optional conferences, (c) 85 percent would like to be more informed and (d) 98 percent stated they would like to receive a newsletter, calendar and a list of suggested parent/child activities. The author's premise that parents would welcome more specific information was correct.

The author concluded that parents were not thoroughly informed on a consistent basis of the curriculum concepts that were being studied daily in the classroom. Many parents were not aware of the home activities that could be done with their child to easily apply, reinforce and enhance concepts and classroom objectives, thereby increasing learning and skill retention.

This practicum seeks to positively impact the problem of meeting parent needs by adequately informing them about classroom skills being taught daily and to provide specific suggestions for skills to practice that are fun, developmentally appropriate and are in alignment with classroom learning objectives.

Outcome Objectives

The goal of this practicum is to provide parents with computer generated materials to increase the amount of appropriate information that they received from this author regarding their child's daily education. A prerequisite for parent involvement normally requires that parents spend time at school. This practicum information attempts to motivate parents to become involved in their child's education even though they are unable to come to school.

To assess this goal parents were asked to complete a follow-up survey administered eight weeks after receiving monthly information pertinent to the kindergarten curriculum objectives. The November survey measured the following objectives in order to assess the positive change in parent use of the information they had received (Appendix J).

1. After eight weeks of implementation, 90 percent of the parents surveyed will state that they are adequately informed about what is happening in their child's classroom even if they are unable to participate in activities at school.

2. After eight weeks of implementation, 90 percent of the parents will state that the parent/child activities are useful in providing suggestions of activities that they could do with their child at home.
3. After eight weeks of implementation, 90 percent of the parents will state that the computer generated materials are a welcome attractive tool and they want this information to continue.

II. RESEARCH

Information Collection

A computer search was conducted by the author to locate information that would be pertinent to this practicum. Many studies were found that supported the premise that parents want and need to be better informed about their child's education. Many studies related to finding a solution for providing parent involvement in their child's school experiences and activities. Most studies required parents to make a time commitment by coming to school and attending training workshops.

The author also conducted a less formal study by interviewing kindergarten teachers in this district and in neighboring districts. The information gathered from these educators indicated that a large majority of parents did not have the time to come to school, but that they wanted to be thoroughly informed about what their child was doing. This information crosses over economic and cultural boundaries (Gordon, 1979).

Accurate communication between home and school is an essential element for having each child experience success and increase his self-image. A child needs to know that the teacher and parents care by communicating information pertinent to success in school. All the adults

in a child's world influence growth and development. Parents are the strongest influence on a child's social, emotional, physical and academic success (Comer, 1988). Comer states that a positive attitude between home and school allows children to internalize positive attitudes and values. Communication beyond four report cards and two optional conferences is necessary to maximize achievement.

At the 1978 Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) conference in San Francisco, Dr. Ira Gordon reviewed the parent impact model of improving home/school communication. This model assumes that educators influence family relationships by helping parents find ways to positively spend time with their child. Improving the parent capabilities for providing an environment that is condusive to application of learning is another major component of this model. Home visit programs, Head Start, and many Title III programs are examples of parent involvement with a tutoring or support focus. Evidence has shown that there are long term positive effects for children whose parents have participated in a parent impact model of involvement.

When considering that few parents have the time available to come to school, it was necessary for the author to do further research of studies that would not require parents to come to school to gain information.

Parents are either active or passive receivers of school information (Cervone, O'Leary, 1982). In developing a parent involvement program, one must determine where the parent population is on this continuum. Cervone and O'Leary state that in the beginning a wide range of activities can be used after determining what time commitment parents are able to make toward their child's education. Second, educators must obtain parent interest and prepare to lead them from being passive to active participants. Third, if educators have not previously worked with parents they must identify the most time and cost efficient method for meeting the needs of the educator and parents.

Parents are the child's first teacher and usually know more about their child who is entering kindergarten than the teacher will gather in a year. Parents are normally willing to assist if they just know what to do. Many times teachers are unable to use techniques or materials because of the pupil-teacher ratio or the learning space needed to accomplish an objective. Parents working with their own child have an opportunity to listen more and use a large variety of learning materials and spaces that are often not available to a classroom teacher with 27 students. As parents become more knowledgeable about activities and methods the benefits will multiply (Lee, 1978). Parent involvement can be divided into

three categories: clerical, instructional and support activities. Teachers must decide what is the most appropriate focus area before asking parents to assist. The emphasis of this practicum is support for the student and curriculum.

Teachers must recognize that parents are a significant force in a child's education. The model called Parents as Tutors increases the motivation and skills of the child and improves the parents self-image. This model is often costly because parents need to have instruction from educators. Capitalizing on the benefits of positively involving parents and building on parent strengths will cement home and school as partners (Rich, VanDien, Mattox, 1979) . Often parents are not uncaring, only uninformed. Many parents are too busy with other commitments to come to school, but most would still like to help their child make meaningful gains in cognitive skills, as well as, increasing self-image and self-confidence levels.

Dorothy Rich (1979), the director of the Home and School Institute at Trinity College in Washington, D. C., has overseen the development of Home Learning Recipes. These recipes are specific learning activities that parents can do with their child at no cost. The single sheet format includes objectives, evaluation, materials list and an activity description.

The recipes have been piloted and used since 1965 with parents and children in kindergarten through secondary age. The activities, while concentrating on the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, use resources of home and community that are not available to classroom teachers. These activities are designed to supplement, not duplicate school work. When parents voluntarily did these activities with their child the implementation outcomes demonstrated that the parents and child self-esteem was increased.

None of the studies reviewed combined the use of the computer, monthly curriculum guide, calendar and parent/child activities that relate directly to classroom objectives. The author's purpose in this practicum is to create effective tools that would keep parents informed, to encourage them to help their child and to assist teachers in developing an efficient method to retrieve information in an easily revised format through computer data disks.

Solution Strategy

Through interviews with colleagues and parents and a thorough review of the professional literature the author identified many possible solutions to the problem of parents becoming better informed. Because

the author is a kindergarten teacher and a Computer Applications major, a unique solution was selected that efficiently combined knowledge in both areas with a focus on the limited time of parents. The computer and selected software programs were utilized to inform parents of current information and activities that were specific to daily classroom objectives. Because curriculum objectives are essentially the same each year it is efficient and practical to retain all information that is shared with parents on data disks and revise that information yearly to meet the specific needs of students and/or curriculum changes.

When presented with this new idea the principal, district curriculum specialist and kindergarten teachers were very enthusiastic. The kindergarten teachers at the site school expressed a desire to participate in this practicum therefore the parents of their students received the computer generated information also.

To implement this plan the author developed information based on weekly team planning sessions and designed materials that were sent home to parents of all kindergarten students at the beginning of September and October. This information consisted of a monthly curriculum overview, a calendar and a list of activities that parents could easily accomplish with little time and few supplies. Those parents who

did not show interest in the past were encouraged to participate in their child's education by completing simple tasks at home and by talking with their child about the things that were happening in the classroom and at school.

After the parents received information for eight weeks they were asked to complete a second survey to determine the usefulness of information received, if that information met their need to be informed even though they were unable to come to school; and to determine if parents wanted the computer generated materials to continue (Appendix J).

III. METHOD

Materials Developed for Parents

This practicum utilized the Apple IIe computer and the ImageWriter printer which was available in the author's classroom. Software programs used were Appleworks, Print Shop, Print Shop Companion and all Print Shop graphics data disks. Letterheads and calendars each have a seasonal theme depicting the month of the school year. This served as the format for providing parents with information pertinent to their child's kindergarten experiences. Curriculum overviews and calendars were designed and written by this author and were sent home at the beginning of September and October to inform parents of major curriculum concepts being studied, special events, homework assignments and general information (Appendices D, E, G, H). A list of suggested parent/child home activities to apply, reinforce and extend skills acquired at school was also provided (Appendices F, I).

All information that was written for parents encompassed district kindergarten curriculum objectives in reading, math, handwriting, social studies, science, health, music and art. The scope and sequence was reviewed as is done each year by the kindergarten team and therefore reflected any new objectives or additional emphasis in effect for the

kindergarten program. This scope and sequence serves as the guide for what objectives will be covered each month. A common strand throughout all materials is an emphasis on self-esteem that the author is hoping to increase by parents and teacher working more cooperatively to benefit each student.

Students assumed the responsibility of giving the parents the curriculum overview, calendar and parent/child activities. As an incentive students were shown the calendar and newsletter and were informed of coming events and activities. This encouraged a higher level of responsibility in students. Parents were advised to expect this communication and they requested it if it had not arrived home by the second class day of each month.

Timeline: Problem to Solution

The following is a descriptive time line of problem identification and the implementation of the solution:

April — Interviewed staff members. Conferenced with colleagues, principal, curriculum specialist and curriculum superintendent.

May — Wrote and administered survey to all parents registering kindergarten students for the Fall session. Tabulated and interpreted results.

July — Designed rough draft for September and October curriculum overview, calendar and parent/child activities. This was based on the previous year scope and sequence plans.

September — After planning meetings, the author developed, designed and printed the curriculum overview, calendar, and parent/child activities to be sent home the beginning of September and October.

October — Wrote follow up survey. Distributed to parents the last week in October.

November — Tabulated and interpreted results. Shared results with principal, curriculum specialists and the appropriate district personnel with computer and curriculum interest.

IV. RESULTS

The major component of the evaluation result was the feedback that parents supplied on the survey conducted at the end of the eight week period. The survey was sent home with 160 kindergarten students. Parents were allowed two weeks to complete and return it before the results were compiled and interpreted. One hundred twenty surveys were returned. Parents were instructed to return the survey with their child or return it to the office to retain anonymity. Result percentages have been figured based on the one hundred twenty surveys returned. The principal, kindergarten teachers and the primary chairperson reviewed the evidences of parent involvement and parent responses. All of these persons offered their support to the follow-on activities that the author anticipates will develop.

After the eight weeks of implementation the parent survey responses provided data relating to the three Outcome Objectives identified.

Outcome Objective 1

After eight weeks of implementation, 90 percent of the parents surveyed will state that they were now aedequately informed about what is happening in their child's classroom even if they are unable to participate in activities at school.

Results. Of the 120 parents responding to the October survey, 98 percent stated that they were aedequately informed about what was taking place in their child's classroom. This is an increase of 83 percent over the 15 percent who indicated on the spring survey that they were informed about their child's classroom and school activities.

OUTCOME OBJECTIVE 2

After eight weeks of implementation, 90 percent of the parents will state that the parent/child activities were useful in providing suggestions of activities that they could do with their child at home.

Results. Of the 120 parents responding to the October Survey, 95 percent stated that the parent/child activities were useful in providing suggestions of activities that they could do with their child at home. Parents replied that working with their child on relevant topics increased their child's feelings of parent involvement. The children were more likely to share events and happenings of the day. This response rate is in alignment with the 98 percent of the parents who indicated in the Spring that they would welcome a newsletter, calendar, and a list of parent/child activities that they could do to reinforce school objectives.

Outcome Objective 3

After eight weeks of implementation, 90 percent of the parents will state that the computer generated materials were a welcome attractive tool and they want this information to continue.

Results. After eight weeks of receiving materials, 98 percent of the 120 parents responding indicated that the computer materials were a most welcome attractive tool and that they wanted the information to continue throughout the school year. Many comments reflected an increase in parent desire to try to schedule more time at school. The author did not encounter any problems during implementation.

In a less formal evaluation the author asked the students about the procedure of taking home the information to parents. Did their parents do specific activities suggested in the parent/child activities? Did their parents remind them about the day's activities? The author assessed student feedback on a daily basis by determining if the student was aware of the activities that were listed on the calendar. This was somewhat difficult to accurately track but the general information revealed some important data. Most students were prepared for special activity days and many spoke informally of fun activities that they had participated in with their parents at home. The school principal also

reported positive feedback that he was receiving from parents concerning the Kindergarten information that they were receiving. Student assessment of this procedure was not a specific outcome objective, but the author believes students reported evidence of parents working more often and in a more appropriate setting than had been demonstrated in previous years of the author's teaching experience. Student feedback regarding the materials was tremendous and the students were always most anxious to take the materials home to share with their parents and other family members.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The school district in which the practicum was implemented has pride in its outstanding nationwide reputation for excellence in education. The district motto is "There is no better place to teach and there is no better place to learn". The district provides support and encourages its educators to grow professionally and to share their accomplishments with colleagues.

The author will continue the use of the computer generated curriculum overview, calendar, and parent/child activities for every month in the school year. These will continue to be designed with a monthly theme and will be saved on data disks to serve as the base for revisions in future years. Copies of each month's materials will be kept in a notebook ready for copying when a child enters after the school year has begun. Parents of students who did not begin school in August were very appreciative of the information from September and October. The insecurity of not knowing for certain what objectives had been covered before their child entered were lowered. Parents will be encouraged to save all information in a folder along with work examples from their child. This folder could then serve as a review in the summer for maintenance or extension of cognitive skills and a memento of the kindergarten year.

Because the support and enthusiasm from colleagues has been great in the planning and implementation of this practicum the author will continue to provide monthly information to all parents of kindergarten students and will share the idea for effective parent communication with staff members at all grade levels. This idea can easily be incorporated into an efficient and effective organizational plan if a teacher has the necessary computer skills. The author has conducted other computer workshops and would conduct in-service for interested staff members in this area.

In May, this information will include nine months of kindergarten curriculum overviews, calendars and parent/child activities. The information will be compiled in a manual and presented to the appropriate district personnel who have an interest in parent and community involvement. It is anticipated that in-service workshops will be conducted first for kindergarten teachers at the district level and the idea may then be shared with other grade levels. This manual will provide an incentive to better communication skills with parents who are interested, but who are unable to come to school to participate regularly in the classroom, parent workshops or seminars.

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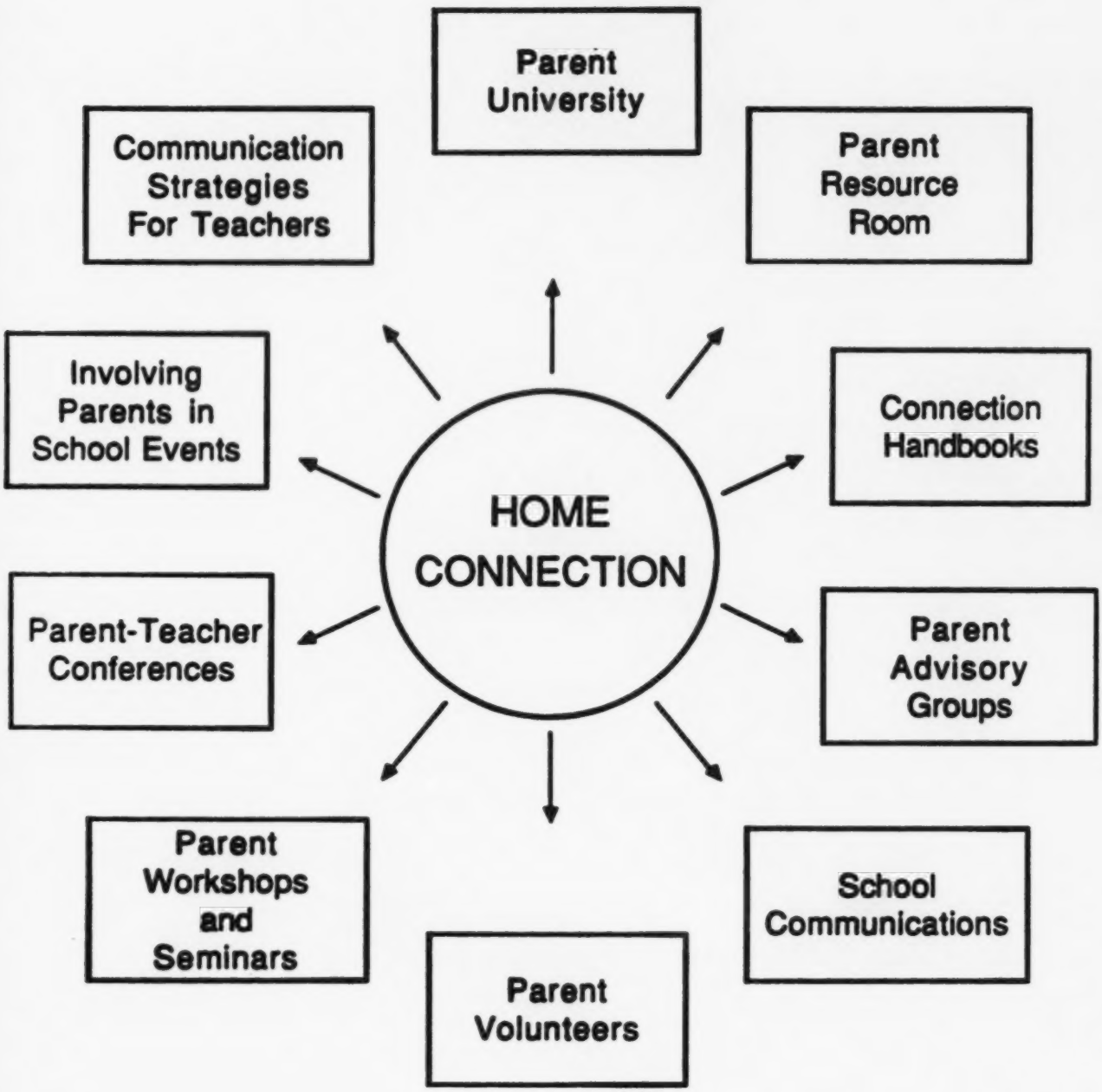
MESA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PARENT EDUCATION

	Birth to Three Years	Three to Five Years	Elementary	Secondary
Level 1 **Disseminating School Information**			parent handbooks school/dept. newsletters report cards teacher communication Migrant Ed liaisons	school newsletters report cards Op Shop Chapter 1 newsletter and handbook (7-9) Migrant Ed liaisons
Level 2 **Involving Parents In School Programs and Events**			open house parent/teacher conferences "In Our Schools Week" student performances "family fun" activities "Grandparents Day" activities	student performances booster clubs
Level 3 **Assisting with Parenting Skills**	Parent University Parent Resource Library Fact Phone (agency referral)	Parent University Parent Resource Library Fact Phone (agency referral) Pre-K Enrichment Actvities Workshops Summer Connection Book (K)	Parent homework handbook Summer Connection (1st) Parent University Parent Resource Library Fact Phone (agency referral) Migrant Ed parent meetings Chapter 1 parent meetings Special Ed support teams Psychological Services parent seminars Indian Ed Parents' Advisory Committee	Parent University Parent Resource Library Fact Phone (agency referral) Chapter 1 parent meetings Migrant Ed parent meetings Special Ed support teams Psychological Services Parent Seminars Indian Ed Parents' Advisory Committee
Level 4 **Teaching Parents to Teach**		Pre-K Parent Workshops Migrant Education: "Teaching Parents to Teach"	Parent homework handbook training workshops for volunteers	

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX B

Parent Involvement In MPS



APPENDIX C

HIGHLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Dear Parents,

Welcome to our Kindergarten world of learning and fun. It is a world that requires us to be partners in providing your child with the best possible tools for gaining new skills, improving old ones and increasing self discipline and self-image. One way that this important partnership works is through open, continuous, and frequent communication with your child's teacher. As this partnership begins I would like to ask your assistance in completing the following questionnaire. Please give this serious thought as your answers are very important in deciding the direction that a home-school communication program could take. What you say will determine whether a program like this is useful and/or desired by parents.

1. How many children do you have in grades K to 12?_____

2. Have you ever been asked your opinion concerning learning content for teaching?_____

3. Has any teacher ever provided you with information consistently through-out the year, other than report cards or 2 parent-teacher conferences?_____

4. If yes, what kind of information did you receive?_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

5. If yes, what grade was your child in?_____

6. If yes, what is the name of the school and/or district?
_____

7. Have you ever been asked to help in the classroom?_____

8. Have you ever helped in the classroom?_____

9. If your schedule permits would you be willing to help in the classroom or at home?
____in the classroom
____material preparation at home
____room mother (party help)
____telephoning
____PTO
____other

10. Would you like to be more informed than you possibly have been before?_____

11. If information would come home each month, would you be willing to take a few minutes and provide feedback about the usefulness of this information?_____

12. Would you be interested in a newsletter listing and describing activities you could do at home?_____

13. Would you be interested in workshops concerning "things' you could do at home?_____

14. Any suggestions of ways we could keep you better informed?

15. Where have you received most of your information about school?

_____your own children
_____friends
_____neighbors
_____newsletters
_____PTO
_____other

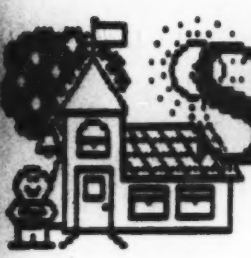
Name(optional)_____

Comments_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Thank you very much for answering these questions. I hope you will feel comfortable in letting the Kindergarten staff, Alice Brecke, Pat Coyle and myself know of your concerns, comments, and hopefully some things you like about the experiences that your child will be having in Kindergarten.

Sincerely,

Nancy Flandach



SEPTEMBER 1988

SCHOOL DAYS

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 A SMILE IS WORTH A 1000 WORDS	2	3
4 WE ARE STUDYING SHAPES AND COLORS FOR THE NEXT 2 WEEKS	5 NO SCHOOL TODAY	6 PTO BOARD MEETING	7	8 REMEMBER TO WEAR TENNIS SHOES ON P.E. DAY	9 RED DAY PLEASE WEAR SOMETHING RED TODAY!	10
11 GRANDPARENTS DAY	12 WE ARE STUDYING THE SOUND OF "C" LIKE IN CAT ALL WEEK	13	14 EVERY CHILD IS SPECIAL IN HIS/HER OWN WAY	15	16 BLUE DAY PLEASE WEAR SOMETHING BLUE TODAY!	17
18 NATIONAL SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK	19 WE ARE STUDYING THE SOUND FOR "O" AS IN OCTOPUS ALL THIS WEEK BOOK FAIR BEGINS	20	21	22 PTO GENERAL MEETING AT 7 PM BOOK FAIR OPEN TONIGHT AFTER PTO MTG.	23 GREEN DAY WEAR GREEN! SKATE PARTY 5 TO 7	24
25 WE ARE STUDYING THE SOUND FOR "G" AS IN GOAT THIS WEEK	26 LAST DAY FOR THE BOOK FAIR	27	28	29	30	

APPENDIX E

HIGHLAND SCHOOL KINDERGARTEN

MAJOR CURRICULUM CONCEPTS

Reading and Language

Letter sounds: c as in cake
o as in octopus
g as in goat

Three Lippincott Letterbooks will be sent home this month, each will be accompanied by a thorough explanation of skills taught in each book. Please refer to back cover for additional information.

Color Words: red, blue, green.

Mathematics

Free Exploration Math Their Way curriculum.

Number Writing: 0 1 2 3 (Ask your child what black dot, purple, green means.)

Calendar Skills: Days, months, weather graphing, birthdays, lost teeth, and a number line showing how many days we have been in school.

Shapes: circle, rectangle, square, triangle, oval, and diamond.

Graphs: Do you have a pet?
How do you come to school?
Color graphs on color days.
How many in your family?

Social Studies

Safety on the bus, playground, and in the classroom.

Science

Caterpillars (life cycles). Water evaporation experiment.

P.E., Music, Media

Children spend 1/2 hour per week with each specialist.

Handwriting

C c O o G g Refer to correct form in the Lippincott Letterbooks.

SEPTEMBER 1988

HIGHLAND SCHOOL KINDERGARTEN

PARENT-CHILD ACTIVITIES

These activities are suggestions of things that you and your child can do together. These will be very helpful in reinforcing classroom skills and making your child feel great about what he's learning.

1. Find the letters C, O, G, on food containers, menues, church bulletins, street and road signs, newspapers, junk mail, etc.
2. See how many things you can find in your house that begin with this months sounds. Let your child write the first letter and you write the rest of the word. Perhaps your child could draw a picture of the object.
3. Look for numbers 0, 1, 2, 3, everywhere you go. Call attention to page numbers when reading bedtime stories.
4. After the good mornings, figure out what day it is. Say the days of the week 3 or 4 times a week until mastered in correct order.
5. Mark off the days on a calendar.
6. Identify shapes in your home and traveling environment. Did you ever think there would be so few squares?
7. Water Evaporation. Try some experiments by using different size containers or by placing them in different locations. Be sure to mark the beginning date, perhaps predict how long evaporation will take.
8. List safety rules that you have at home and look for similarities with school rules.

Please be sure to call or drop me a note if you have any concerns, comments, or ideas that you would like to share with me.

SEPTEMBER 1988

OCTOBER 1988

HAPPY HALLOWEEN

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2 STILL STUDYING "G" THIS WEEK	3	4	5 ARE YOU READING TO YOUR CHILD EVERY DAY?	6	7 WEAR SOMETHING ORANGE TODAY!	8
9 WE ARE STUDYING THE SOUND OF "A" AS IN APPLE THIS WEEK	10	11 GOV "K" CUTH FESTIVAL AT THE RESERVATION ALL INVITED BRING ANIMAL PICTURES FOR GRAPHING	12 COLUMBUS DAY IS THE WORLD ROUND OR FLAT? ASK HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A GLOBE?	13 FIREMEN VISIT WITH A BIG FIRE TRUCK! HAVE YOU EVER HAD A FIRE DRILL AT YOUR HOUSE?	14 WEAR SOMETHING PURPLE TODAY! PLEASE BRING AN APPLE FOR GRAPHING!	15
16 WE ARE STUDYING THE SOUND OF "D" AS IN DOG THIS WEEK	17	18 PLEASE BRING A DOG OR A DOLL FOR GRAPHING FUN	19 DID YOU READ ANY GOOD BOOKS THIS WEEK? ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO SHARE BOOKS FOR SHOW AND TELL	20	21 FUN FUN HALLOWEEN FUN AT THE PTO CARNIVAL TODAY'S COLOR BROWN!	22
23 WE ARE STUDYING THE SOUND OF "S" AS IN SUN FOR TWO WEEKS	24	25	26 SCHOOL PICTURE DAY LOOK YOUR BEST!	27	28 AM DISMISS 10:30 PM ARRIVE 11:30 PM DISMISS 1:30 TEACHER PLANNING DAY	29
30 PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES BEGIN ON THE 1ST DID YOU RETURN YOUR TAN SLIP TO CONFIRM THE TIME?	31 HALLOWEEN PARTY WEAR COSTUMES PLEASE MASKS IN A BAG FOR SAFETY!					

HIGHLAND SCHOOL KINDERGARTEN

MAJOR CURRICULUM CONCEPTS

Reading and Language

Letter Sounds: a as in apple
d as in dog
s as in sun

Color words: yellow, orange, purple, brown, black. Review red, blue, and green.

Blending: This is a new skill introduced in Letterbook 5. Please pay close attention to this important skill in prepartion for reading success. Remember all children are not ready for the same skill mastery at the same time.
Examples: sad dog odd dad add dogs

Mathematics

Number writing: 4, 5, 6, 7, Remember black dot, purple, green.

Sequencing: Number sequencing and picture sequencing, in the correct order. Counting to 20.

Apple Math: Estimating weight: of a full bag of apples, how many apples were brought to school, and how many seeds in an apple.

Pumpkin Math: Estimating weight and number of lines on the pumpkin.

Graphing: Kinds of apples brought to school.
How do you like your apples?
How would you carve a pumpkin?
Color graphs on color days.
Kinds of dolls or stuffed dogs.

Social Studies

Fire Safety, Columbus Day, Halloween

Science

Classifying animals. Animal behaviors. Seasonal changes.

Handwriting

Letters: C c O o G g A a D d S s

Write name in correct form. First letter is the only capital letter. Letter formation begins at or near the top. Refer to correct form in the Letterbooks.

HELP WE ARE IN DESPERATE NEED OF EGG CARTONS WITH HIGH DIVIDERS AND BABY FOOD JARS WITH LIDS.

HIGHLAND SCHOOL KINDERGARTEN

PARENT-CHILD ACTIVITIES

These activities are suggestions of things that you and your child can do together. These will be very helpful in reinforcing classroom skills and making your child feel great about what he's learning.

1. Play letter find. Use a magic marker or crayon and circle letters, C c O o G g A a D d S s and numbers 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7, in newspapers or magazines. Wednesday is the best day, because of all the large print.
2. Practice counting in the car. Depending on your child's ability, there are many things along the way that can be counted.
3. List the names of all family members, t.v. shows and characters whose names begin with the sounds studied.
4. Pour 1 inch of salt in the bottom of a shoe box, practice writing letters, numbers, or names.
5. Say letter name or sound and let your child write it in the salt. Outdoors, mud or sand are great for this.
6. Talk about animals and why they are alike or different.
7. Cut apart letterbooks (or copy words and draw pictures) and make a picture and sound matching game.
8. Glue pictures, words or letters onto index cards. Play concentration. Turn the cards over 2 at a time to try to find matches.

****As we have assessed the skills of each child, we have found that many do <u>not</u> know their addresses and telephone numbers. Please spend a few minutes every day helping your child master this important information.

Please be sure to call or drop me a note if you have any concerns, comments, or ideas that you would like to share with me.

APPENDIX J

HIGHLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Dear Parents,

During registration in May, many of you completed a parent survey about home and school communication. Thanks to those of you who did. Because you wanted increased and effective communication from school, you have received the following in September and October; calendar of activities, over-view of curriculum skills and suggested parent-child activities. Hopefully, you have found these to be very informative.

It would be helpful if you would take a few minutes and answer the following questions to help determine if the monthly information is meeting your needs.

1. How do you feel about the overall communication between home and school?

2. Do you use the monthly Kindergarten calendar?

3. Does it help you know what is happening at school and in your child's classroom?

4. Do you read the Kindergarten curriculum letter?

5. Is it helpful to you in working with your child at home?

6. If so, is there anything that you would like to see added or deleted?

7. Do you do any of the Parent-Child activities that are suggested?

8. Please ask your child what his favorite and least favorite thing is about school.

favorite?

least favorite?

9. Our first parent workshop will be in November, titled <u>At Home Cooking Experiences</u>. Will you try to come?

COMMENTS:

Please return this survey to your child's teacher by Friday. Thank you very much for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Nancy Flandach